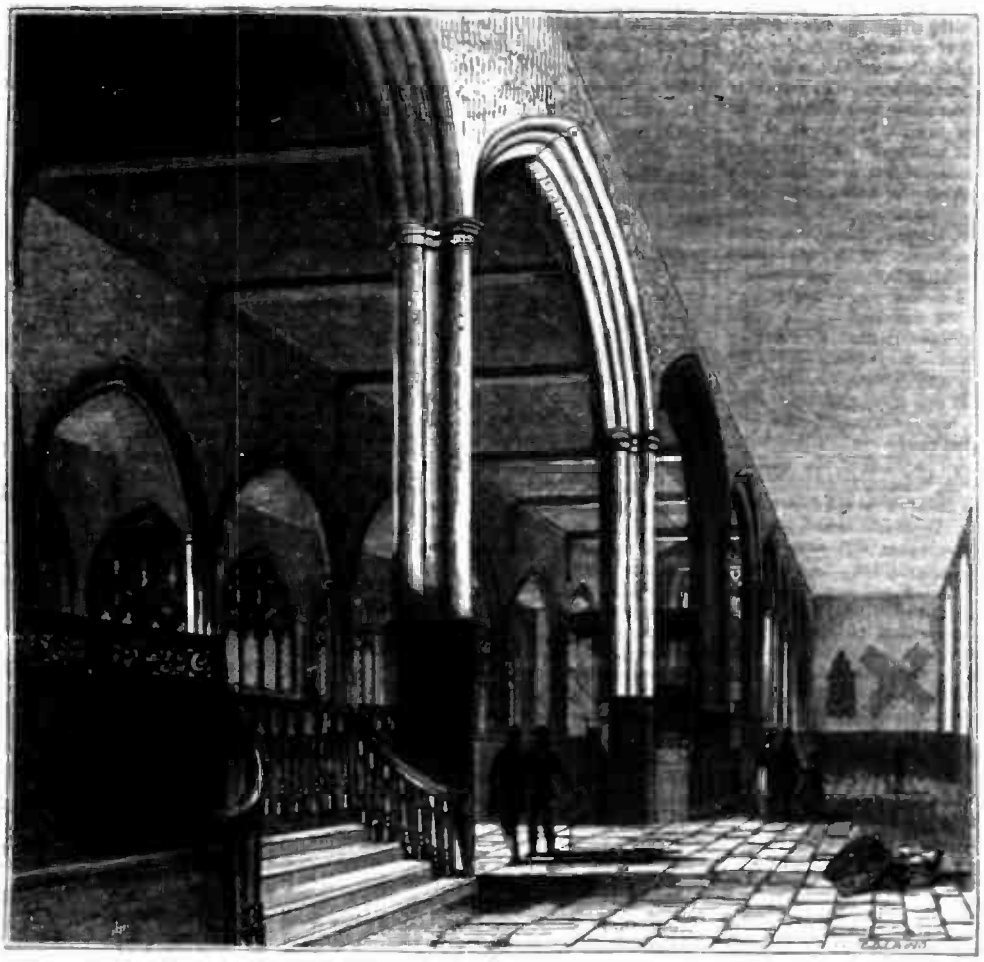

INTERIOR VIEW OF THE DUTCH CHURCH, AUSTIN FRIARS.

This church measures within its walls about 149 feet long and 78 feet 6 inches wide; it is divided into nave (or choir) and aisles by eight detached columns on each side, each consisting of a cluster of four attached circular shafts surrounding an octagonal core-shaft, curved inwardly between the surrounding shafts in the form of the Roman cavetto moulding: above these rise nine arches on each side, but the centre is not carried up as a clerestory, but covered with a coarse roof, ceiled in five planes, with roughish tie-beams, exposed, and without tracery, having only plain bent knees reaching down to plain stone corbels. The aisles are roofed by slopes which are not far from horizontal, and are covered with lead. Like those of the Temple Church, London, the columns have settled considerably out of perpendicular, but not through the expansion of vaulting, for there is no vaulting here, but from some other cause; and the columns have not all been forced outwardly by a central upward expansion, for some of them lean on one side, southwardly, towards the centre, while those on the other side, following them, lean outwardly.

The capitals of these columns are smeared with black, which we were told was done as an act of mourning at the death of some principal personage connected with the church.

The windows of the church are designed in very fine taste, with rich flowering and inventive tracery, though their mouldings are over plain; we propose hereafter to give their details, and those who desire to imitate, can do that which ought always in such case to be done, viz., to improve them where they are inferior; therefore, while their general forms are retained, mouldings of a superior character may be substituted. The great western window, which has seven days or lights, divided by six mullions, is much superior to the lateral windows, which have each the condemnable number of four days, instead of the more elegant and symbolical arrangement of three such divisions.

In some of the windows, the glazing of which is in general plain, are some pieces of rather modern stained yellow glass; in some places in them appear, on quarries of a lozenge form, the letters i h s; in others, in Roman letters, the words IESVS TEPLE accompanied by the date 1550; again, in others, on a bend-dexter of transparent white glass, the following inscription:—

· THE TEPLE· OF· OUR LORD·IESVS.

the letters, dots, and border-lines being yellow. The buttresses between the windows project very far from the walls, in spite of which, and of the absence of any very great pressure, the walls have changed from their original position. At the west end of the church, occupying a portion of the first bay, is an imperfectly separated porch, at the sides of which lie two vestries; that to the north used by the elders of the church, and that to the south by its deacons; these contain some curious portraits, books, drawings, and prints of the church and its members, with some other curious property; and at the north and south angles of the west end of the church are two turret-staircases, which lead to the side roofs of the fabric. The porch is surmounted by a gallery, containing an organ and a library, and supported by curious grotesque Ionic columns with garlands of fruit and flowers. The gallery is inclosed in front by curious balusters, each of which has pendent from it a garland.

The altar, which occupies one bay of the centre compartment of the church, is raised 2 feet 8 inches above the general level of the church-flooring, and is ascended by a flight of stairs at each end, and by two other flights near the ends of the front; the altar is inclosed in front, and at parts of its ends, by an open balustrade of oak; the remainder of the ends are inclosed by very high wainscoat paneling surmounted by rich carved open scroll-work, which may be seen in our view. At the back of the altar ranges a very curious description of carved wainscoating of a Dutch fashion, consisting of arched work and paneling: the same kind of wainscoting is continued all along the eastern and western walling of the aisles, and along portions of the lateral walls of the church. The altar-piece itself, which reaches nearly to the roof, is of painted canvas, bearing an anomalous Ionic subject of not very good classical architecture, and, like the altars of the Church of England, the decalogue, apostles' creed, and dominical prayer. The communion-table is a prodigious piece of oaken wooden-work, no less than 29 feet long, and having benches all round it, provides accommodation for a great assembly to receive the Eucharist sitting. Of the whole interior of this vast church, only two bays, out of nine of the central avenue of the church, are fitted up with pews for the ordinary use of the congregation.

Some small parts of two other bays contain open benches. The whole of the aisles, which are about 22 feet wide, and all the remainder of the church, are left open. The pulpit, which is erected on the north side of the central avenue against the third column from the east, is a very curious piece of wainscot-work in the Dutch style, covered by a great sounding-boarding, with carved work and pendents. In the church is lying an extremely fine oaken carved pulpit, adorned with scroll-work and garlands, taken from the late neighbouring French church in Threadneedle-street, and for the purchase of which we were told the sum 100*l.* is required.

In the third bay from from the east of the southern wall of the church is a comparatively modern porch, of the Elizabethan or immediately subsequent era. Surrounding the fabric are many achievement and fine mural monuments, and in the pavement are numerous carved flat grey marble, and other memorials of the dead; these are principally of merchants, who have been engaged in the Dutch trade.

The body of the church contains no heating flues or apparatus, but large braziers are used for that purpose, one of which is to be seen upon the floor in our view; the live charcoal is taken from thence and placed in earthen pipkins, which, being inclosed in wainscot-carved, open-work, square boxes, are, in winter, placed under the ladies' feet.

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